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THE LABAN ART OF MOVEMENT GUILD MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL

The articles published in this issue of the Magazine are concerned with various aspects of movement and dance. It is hoped that in this way every reader will find something to interest his or her particular taste.

Broadly speaking, the policy of the Publications Committee over the last few years has been to provide something for everybody in every number of the Magazine.

An alternative to this would be to devote one whole number to one particular topic, such as, for example, Movement in Education; the Philosophy and Psychology of Movement; Movement Notation; Movement and its relation to the other Arts; and so on.

The Publications Committee would welcome readers' opinions. Which of the two policies outlined above do you prefer? If the second, what topics would you suggest? May we please have your views?

ADDA HEYNSSEN

It is with great regret that we report the death on 5th March, 1961, of Adda Heynssen, at her home at Praz du Pont, Blonay S/Vevey, Switzerland.

An obituary article will be published in our next issue.

SUMMARY OF WORK COVERED AT COUNCIL MEETINGS DURING THE PAST YEAR

MEMBERSHIP

Reports of work of the Membership Advisory Committee were given at each meeting. These covered preparatory work on the proposed functions of the Joint Advisory Board. Later, when this Board was dissolved at the request of the Trustees of the Centre, a new examinations sub-committee was set up, consisting of Mrs. Bodmer, Miss Palmer and Miss Primrose, and this committee reported on work done in preparation for the new Standard Examinations of the Guild. (*See below, pp. 8 to 10*).

PUBLICATIONS

Regular reports were given by the Editor of the Magazine, Miss Bergin, and discussion took place upon policy governing future publication of the Magazine. Out of this discussion arose the decision to institute some research regarding the effect of the introduction of the work into schools and colleges over the past decade.

CONFERENCE AND TRAINING WEEK-ENDS

The usual arrangements were made for the Annual Conference, and the October Refresher Week-end for Masters and Graduates at Swanwick. In addition, a week-end course for Associate Members was planned. This is to be held at Swanwick from 21st-23rd April, 1961.

FILMS

A small sub-committee was set up to investigate the possibilities of making films and film-strips.

JUNIORS, L.A.M.G.

As a result of the interest and enthusiasm of certain Council Members, an ad hoc committee was set up to examine the possibility of admitting young people of secondary school age into the Guild.

DOROTHY M. HORNBY,
JEAN HEATH.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 1961

The best yet—or do we always say this after each Conference? I think perhaps we do, for each time we gain so much: renewed inspiration, the joy of dancing together, an extension of experience and knowledge, and the stimulus of discussion with old friends and new. Not least, I think, is the satisfaction of being able to meet at the Centre, and of feeling that the Guild belongs there. I am sure that as long as the Centre can cope with the numbers, it is the right place for the Conference and gives us something we should not get elsewhere.

The number attending this year was very gratifying. One hundred and eight of us met on Saturday morning for a practical session with Lilla Bauer. This was a delightful surprise for many of us who had not seen her for some years. Her task was, briefly, to get the Conference off to a good start. She did exactly this, in the easy, happy, informal way which we have come to associate with her over the years. In no time at all we were moving among each other, with partners and in groups, working up gradually to a given pattern which yet allowed for individual interpretation and a good deal of fun. Next came a training sequence in which the aim was clarity and accuracy of performance. We realised again how important this aspect of our work is, and how much practice we need.

The Laban Lecture, read by Miss Ullmann, followed and is given in full elsewhere in the Magazine.

The Annual General Meeting which took place in the afternoon was exceptionally lively and resulted in the decision to add a new category to Guild Membership, that of Junior Members.

As a result of the annual elections, Valerie Preston and Joan Russell were chosen to represent Graduates, Masters and Fellows on the Guild Council; Jane Bacon, David Henshaw, Brian Morgan and Betty Osgathorp to represent Associates.

On Saturday evening a programme of films was arranged, showing children's work at Infant, Junior and Secondary stages, and adult work at the professional level. The main purpose here was that the films should give rise to a discussion on the problems of film-making, and it was unfortunate that time did not allow for this, as obviously there was much to be said. Some of us felt that this topic might profitably be pursued next year. The silent films did not appear to set quite as many problems as there are with sound. This one, "Let's Dance," made for the Lancashire Education Authority, was introduced by Elsie Palmer, who told us of some of the difficulties which arose, e.g., finance, acoustics, synchronisation of sound and movement, copyrights and so on.

The first silent film, of Infant and Junior Children was made by June Warner at a school in the North Riding. It showed a variety of work and had captured the vitality and spontaneity of young children's movement, and their absorption in what they were doing.

The second film was made at an Infants' School in Morpeth, and was intended for use in training teachers. For this reason one theme, that of sudden and sustained movement, was taken. In the first part the children were given the movement experience and the second part showed their use of that experience in their response to music. Again one of the most delightful things was the children's absorption in spite of the fact that the film was being made.

"Let's Dance" showed Grammar School girls taught by Clare Sumner, and was intended to show a standard which could be reached as a result of the usual once-a-week lesson. It covered a wide range, and the quality of the girls' movement and their obvious enjoyment were very striking. Their appreciation of form and composition was apparent in all they did, from dance-studies to dance-dramas.

The final film was of Hettie Loman's "Black Swan" and "Ophelia" danced by Sally Archbutt. This film was made for the purpose of recording the dances, and it seemed to me likely that filming a solo dancer in a fairly limited space presented fewer practical difficulties than the films of the children had done.

We enjoyed all the films and are grateful to those who made and showed them.

On Sunday morning there were two more practical sessions. Lisa Ullmann took the first one, her theme being a sequence based on the use of the dimensions and planes. She made us more aware of our bodies in relation to space, helping us to achieve greater clarity of form, accuracy of performance, and a deeper understanding of the expressive qualities involved in rising, sinking, opening, closing, advancing and retreating. We realised how difficult it is to keep to the essence of a movement, and how fatally easy to add embellishments and exaggerations which detract from the true meaning. We were grateful for the chance to move once again under Lisa's direction, and to experience her skilful teaching.

The second session was taken by Sylvia Bodmer in her own inimitable way. She worked on a theme of partner relationships to music from Grétry's "Ballet Suite." The partner work was built up into a satisfying group composition involving changing group formation, clear form and direction, and contrasting moods. It is always fascinating to see these compositions take shape and come to life under Sylvia's direction, and this one—as they always do—brought the Conference to a happy end, leaving us with a feeling of achievement.

This was indeed a most enjoyable Conference, and we must thank Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer and Lilla Bauer for their teaching; Phyllis Holder for coming to play for us once again; Joan Heath and Dorothy Hornby, our indefatigable Secretaries, who organise us so very efficiently; all those who looked after the domestic arrangements and did the chores so cheerfully; and, of course, Lisa Ullmann for allowing us once again to hold the Conference at the Centre.

KAY TANSLEY.

GUILD MEMBERSHIP

We welcome to the Guild the following new Members:

Associates:

Miss M. Brimelow ..... Sussex.
Miss B. Candey ..... Kent.
Miss P. P. Chaplin ..... Essex.
Miss C. M. Davies ..... Cornwall.
Miss U. M. Davies ..... London.
Miss E. B. Hamper ..... Surrey.
Miss I. M. Harris ..... Derby.
Miss M. Lettice ..... Yorks.
Mrs. P. N. Morgan ..... Worcs.
Miss S. Murphy ..... Hants.
Miss P. A. Pincott ..... Worcs.
Miss M. A. Sharman ..... Lancs.
Miss C. Smart ..... Warwicks.
Miss J. Tyrrell ..... Sussex.
Miss V. E. Verdin ..... London.
Mrs. J. Walton ..... Worcs.

Affiliated Groups:

Bishop Otter Training College ..... Sussex.
Trent Park Training College ..... Middlesex.

Congratulations to the following:

Graduates:

Miss J. Howard.
Miss M. Hunter.
Miss M. Parkin.
Miss K. M. Smith.

REGULATIONS FOR GRADUATE MEMBERSHIP

GRADUATE MEMBERSHIP

Those wishing to become Graduate Members must comply with the following:

1. They must have been Associate Members for one year.
2. Attendance must have been made at:
   (*a*) an Annual Conference,
   (*b*) a Training Week-end of the Guild.
3. They must pass the Standard Examination of the Guild. (See below.)

Fulfilment of the above conditions may be in any order and Nos. 2 and 3 may be carried out during the year of Associate Membership, but qualification will be conferred only at the end of that year.

Candidates who have successfully completed at least a year's course at the Art of Movement Studio at Addlestone will be exempt from the Standard Examination, but must comply with regulations 1 and 2.

Applicants living abroad will be expected to comply with regulations 1 and 3, and will be asked to supply a reference from a representative of the Guild.

DETAILS OF EXAMINATIONS FOR 1961

Saturday, 13th May, in Manchester.

Saturday, 11th November, in London.

All Candidates must be Members of the Laban Art of Movement Guild

SYLLABUS FOR STANDARD EXAMINATION

THEORY

The comprehensive use of the body—

(a) in motion:

(i) whole body participating, (ii) body parts initiating the movement, (iii) relationship of different parts of the body.

(b) in rest:

body shapes (wall, ball, arrow and screw).

Conception of the Sphere of Movement, including:

(i) 3 levels: High, Medium, Deep, (ii) 27 directions: Dimensional, Diagonal, Diametral, (iii) near the body and far from the body.

Rhythm and Phrasing in Movement, including:

(i) placing of accents within a phrase, (ii) duration and timing, (iii) 4 motion factors of weight, space, time and flow.

The establishment of relationships:

(i) awareness of others, (ii) with a partner, (iii) in a group.

Notation of Movement:

(a) The notation of the flow of movement in the body and the duration of movement.

The Staff.

Timing.

Contraction and Extension.

Signs for parts of trunk, legs, arms and the head.

(b) The notation of weight-level and directions and movement levels.

Directions.

Changes of front-turns.

Pathways.

PRACTICAL

Candidates must come prepared to **demonstrate:** —

A prepared movement sequence, with or without music. (Record-playing facilities *only*).

Differentiation of effort qualities.

The use of a variety of spatial possibilities in the sphere of movement—growing and shrinking in space.

Reproduction of an observed sequence.

Spontaneous invention of movement motifs.

The ability to establish the right Group awareness and Group relationship.

The use of sound, percussion or music.

LABAN LECTURE, 1961

DANCE IN GENERAL

(First of a series of eight open lectures on the History of Dance, given by Rudolf Laban at Dartington Hall in 1939).

When we wish to give a survey of the historical development of a happening or of an activity we must above all try to define what this happening or this activity really is.

During the relatively long stretch of time in which I have been concerned with dancing I have heard and read an amazing number of definitions of the word 'dance'.

Let us begin with the most common explanations. It is said, and I think it was a prominent scientist who first said it: 'dance is rhythmically ordered movement'. All right! But what movement is not rhythmically ordered? Thus any kind of movement would be dance. Such an idea might be accepted but a description in these terms of the development of all motion existing on earth or in the universe would be far beyond our capacity. Old mystics tell us that the universe is nothing other than a dance of the stars around a divinity. Also some contemporary scientists like to express their admiration of the sparkling sky by referring to the rounds of the celestial bodies, or to the miraculous vibrations which seem to constitute all matter, as a dance.

These physical and chemical dances in Nature or of Nature arouse our imagination and we respond to them with feeling and wonder. Not only do we admire the dances we see on the stage, but we likewise admire the dance of the flames in a fireplace, the dance of the water in a fountain, and the dance of the clouds in a storm.

Everyone who has seen the growth of a crystal or of a flower in a slow motion film will readily agree that these chemical or natural

processes have something dance-like. We see swaying and bursting, turning and unfolding movements and we can recognise harmonious sequences with which one movement follows the other.

And what about the dance of man? Is it something so extraordinary? Have we not heard that even animals have their dances? I should like to read to you one or two descriptions of some scientific observations of animal dances.

The first one was written by a scientist named Appun. "I saw a group of some twenty mountain chickens of brilliant yellow-orange colour, gathered together in a kind of dance characteristic of these beautiful birds. In the centre one of the cocks executed dance-like movements as he hopped about the open place with wings extended and tail outspread. On the branches of the bushes round about the others sat expressing their admiration of the dancer with the strangest sounds. As soon as one cock was exhausted, he joined the spectators, uttering a peculiar cry, and another took his place".

In Cape York in north-eastern Australia, Maclaren witnessed a dance of the stilt birds. "The birds, of a kind known locally as Native Companions, were long-legged creatures, almost as tall as storks, and with white and grey feathers; and the dance took place in the centre of a broad, dry swamp, from the edge of which, in a concealed place, we watched. There were some hundreds of them, and their dance was in the manner of a quadrille and in the matter of rhythm and grace excelling any quadrille that ever was. In groups of a score or more they advanced and retreated, lifting high their long legs and standing on their toes, now and then bowing gracefully one to another, now and then one pair encircling with prancing daintiness a group whose heads moved upwards and downwards and sideways in time to the stepping of the pair. At times they formed one great prancing mass, with their long necks thrust upwards and the wide swaying of their backs like the swaying of the sea. Then suddenly, as in response to an imperative command, they would sway apart, some of them to rise in low, encircling flight, and some to stand as in little gossiping groups; and presently they would form in pairs or sets of pairs and the prancing and the bowing and advancing and retreating would begin all over again".

The psychologist, Köhler, for six years in charge of a special laboratory for the study of anthropoid apes in Tenriffa, maintained

in his report to the Prussian Academy of Science the astonishing fact that the anthropoid apes dance.

He told of a female chimpanzee who, when he once appeared unexpectedly, "began to hop first on one leg and then on the other in a strangely excited manner. The hopping was followed by a whirling with arms, outstretched horizontally. Now and then the apes combined a forward movement with the whirling, with the result that as they rotated they moved across the clearing. Sometimes two apes circled around a post. One after the other the rest of the animals appeared, joined the circle, and finally the whole group, one behind the other, marched in orderly fashion around the post. Now their movements changed quickly. They were no longer walking but trotting. Stamping with one foot and putting the other down lightly, they beat out what approached a distinct rhythm with each of them tending to keep step with the rest. Sometimes they brought their heads into play and bobbed them up and down, with jaws loose, in time with the stamping of their feet. All the animals appeared to take a keen delight in this primitive round dance.

"In these dances the chimpanzee likes to bedeck his body with all sorts of things, especially strings, vines and rags that dangle and swing in the air as he moves about."

We see that these dances remind us of those of little children, and as far as we can judge, also of the dances of men in the most primitive state of civilisation. The few tribes which to-day still live in a stone-age state of culture, dance in this way. I like to call this kind of dancing "natural dancing".

Here I should like to stress a point which seems to me to be of fundamental importance when we wish to talk about movement.

When you evoke before your mind's eye the image of hopping apes, hopping natives, hopping birds and hopping children, you will see above all, birds, children, natives, apes, that is, beings. Your memory will recall the fact that they move, but this will be only a vague and indistinct secondary notion. When asked to tell what these animals do, many of you will answer, "They hop, they hop around in a circle". But the outline of this circle with its intersecting regular up and down pattern created by the hopping will not be clearly present in your mind. Here lies the difference between the spectator who watches the outer proceedings of a performance and the observer who responds with his whole

being to the action it contains. The natural dancer remembers chiefly all the hopping-circling movement and when dancing himself he loses all awareness of his external appearance. He loses more than this. All objects around him vanish, he loses himself in the movement, his whole being becomes hopping-circling, and the action is intensely felt and executed in its particular form.

It is from this point of view that we must try to look upon movement, both actual as well as imagined. This is, of course, not easy, but it is possible.

Let us once more return to animal dances. There exist numerous descriptions of these made many years ago as well as recently. Ancient literature contains many very charming reports, and when we look around with open eyes we can easily discover such dances and see them for ourselves.

The definition of what is 'dance' becomes, however, somewhat difficult. The dance of animals is surely not only rhythmically organised movement but it seems an expression of a state of mind of a living creature.

Let us go into this a little further. How can circling around a post give pleasure to a living being? Can we simply explain this by the effect of dizziness which succeeds all turning? Is it only the intoxication that gives happiness, that brings oblivion of an often felt melancholy and solitude? Or can we discover in the prancings and circlings and in the pattern of the entire play another factor which leads to contentment and joy?

The first being who became aware of such feelings and their possible causes was primitive man. In his dancing he instinctively performed certain shapes and patterns which he felt very intensely. The circle was one of them. Circling, turning, whirling was to him a rhythmical repetition, a recurrence of a happening. This recurrence appeared in both the repeated steps and the repeated emphasis of certain areas in space which he would entwine and fill with his movement, thus giving him a feeling of unity. Dizziness, intoxication, oblivion of time and space, of thoughts, fears and desires were the result of it. The only desire alive at this movement was to fill the space with rhythm and to give to this rhythm its corresponding pattern in space. Of course, primitive man could not have given such complicated explanations, he just accepted the shape as a symbol and worshipped it. The circle, for instance, carried an unconscious expression of his unified

feeling and thought. It was, however, not the shape of the circle alone but the circling movement, the actual action, which led to the desired state of body and mind. While such dancing filled people with joy and happiness, and often with intoxication, we are struggling for words to describe such experiences. Shall we characterise them with the dry conventionalism of science, for instance, as states of excitement?

Here I should like to refer to the word emotion which seems to me to express the necessary psychological counterpart of a process described by the word motion. Motion—emotion: these words fit marvellously into my theme. Their obvious affinity is surely not accidental; to me it is significant, and it supports the explanations I am attempting to make. Of course, an intricate definition of the two words might present some stumbling-blocks, but you will perhaps allow me to employ them in their simple sense. Motion and emotion form a unit for the dancing primitive. The feeling of this unity makes him happy and free, it increases his vitality and allows his emotions to become more colourful.

Is it perhaps simplicity in the way of living which gives us the key to this unity? Life and action remain then no more a desire or mere wish but they become an accomplishment, a fulfilment. It is only too obvious that the opposite, namely, to be lacerated and torn into pieces and dispersed in many directions, is a most disagreeable state. A healthy organism likes the feeling of concentrated strength. It is somehow its essence, its natural state, or even more, its ideal state. When acting as a unit man is content, he can be sure of the success of his undertakings. In the course of his activity, unity is not only symbolized but also achieved by the continuity with which he executes his actions. Continuity asserts itself in repetition, recurrence and in the organisation of a rhythm.

However, man does not content himself only with motions and emotions which he has, so to speak, inflcited upon himself. He has also the desire to act upon somebody or something, to influence and to attract other beings and to drag them into the whirl of reciprocal action and reaction. Such is the cause of manifold happenings. At first there is perhaps self-expression. Primitive beings are always enormously expressive and therefore also impressive with their movement. But they have, too, the power to

attract others and the desire to communicate. Dancing together in groups is, for instance, a result of such an urge.

Why do apes and primitive men so gladly join the rounds of their fellows? Is it the desire for imitation? To say so would be only a vague statement. There is surely more to it than a simple urge to copy an external pattern. Primitive man as well as some animals has a good understanding of the significance of other beings' postures and gestures, often much better than civilised man. I think that anyone who loves dance has such an understanding. When unsophisticated man sees that the other one is content he tries to be the same, and this not superficially or externally but with his whole being. A mere mimicking, that is, servilely imitating the movements, would be an inadequate method of achieving likeness. As we know, art is not the slavish imitation of Nature. Neither is common action the result of people copying one another. This calls for a much deeper penetration into the vital functions of the common deed. It demands a complete awareness of what is going on and of how the process is effected and affected. The strong need for unity, for instance, not only leads to a continual enlarging of the circle of the dancers until everyone present has joined in, it also demands a perfection of each tiny movement in each small part of the dance. Thus rhythm and the use of the body and its limbs become more and more perfected and co-ordinated in each individual as well as in the whole group.

A striving for harmony exists not only in the indefinite large but also in the immeasurable small. In nature we can observe rhythmical recurrence of the slightest pulsation of energy and we can see the most appropriate shape created by the smallest movement. In our time the world of shapes and their harmonic relationships is not as well known as the one of rhythm. It is true we have a certain feeling for the beauty of shapes and forms, but this has somewhat degenerated owing to aesthetic prejudices and probably also to aesthetic indifference. You will realise that I am touching here upon a very important thing which concerns the refinement of aesthetic feeling. To attain this, I think, is a matter of coherence and interdependence with a genuine experience of unity, the same experience which animated the whirlings and hoppings of primitive man. Yet in dancing man can also develop his feeling of form and learn to appreciate the structures,

transformations and relations of shapes. This is a fact which we shall thoroughly investigate another time.

The natural urge for balance and harmony is hidden in the slightest stirring of a single part of the body. Each nerve, each muscle, each cell must co-operate to establish the unity of motion and emotion. We observe this attribute of the dance not so much in the patterns on the floor or in the air, but rather in the counter-play of the dancer's limbs and of the various parts of his body.

The ape who with his hopping greeted Mr. Appun when he suddenly appeared, and the cock of the mountain chickens who performed alone, will be a good point of departure to find out something about harmony.

First of all, I am not sure if the hopping ape really greeted the scientist or if he perhaps feared him. The hopping from one leg to the other has different meanings. Primitive men, children and also animals, as we know, perform this movement very often and in different ways and for multiple reasons. I remember one typical case from my own childhood. The impression was so intense that I still have a vivid recollection of it to-day. I once boasted that I would never fear anybody or anything. My play-fellows had the ingenious and incidentally educative idea to prove the contrary. One night they built a magnificent ghost with little candles as eyes, and they moved with this tall apparition towards me. I can still feel it in my bones and I hopped rhythmically from one leg on to the other, shouting in a sing-song way: "I don't fear you, I don't fear you".

As travellers tell us, pleasure, joy, surprise, anger, fear and many other states of excitement cause natives to move in a similar way. I see in this action an instinctive attempt to keep balance between inner and outer equilibrium. The exaggerated beating of the heart which generally accompanies such an excitement serves, I think, a similar purpose. The essential thing is, however, that the natural impulse to keep the equilibrium is to perform an action, namely, that of hopping, which is an action full of resolution perhaps to fight and stand firm in view of a coming struggle, or to leap up with rejoicing of good fortune.

The significance of hopping with its equilibrating effect stands in contrast to the harmonising experience gained by performing a round, a circle. A circle means expansion, going outside far into the largeness of space Equilibrium is the tendency to the

infinite small, spatially speaking, to the point. The point as well as the circle are space-forms. Our feeling responds sympathetically to such forms. Turning, circling give us, as we have seen, the feeling of largeness and expansion. Hopping gives us the feeling of smallness and concentration. The rhythmical repetition of the hopping enhances our concentration of a point. Adults, and particularly dignified Europeans of our time, do not hop when excited. They behave as if frozen and stiffened in the centre of their equilibrium. It is very interesting to notice that primitive people worship their gods by hopping, while highly civilised men express their awe of the divine by extremely slow and solemn gestures or even by complete stillness.

An interesting fact which is somehow connected with the feeling of equilibrium is that birds which have the ability to rise up into the third dimension, into the air, generally choose the ground for their dances. Dance is bound to the earth. The flying, skimming, zig-zagging of bees and other insects seem to be a much quieter dance, a dance of patterns, a dream-dance perhaps. Real dance always consists of the change between stillness and stir, between the held equilibrium on a point of support and the gentle swaying or lively breaking away from it. This play characterises also our conception of rhythm. When speaking about hopping and equilibrium, I should like to remind the dance students of their first trials of standing on one leg expressively. I am sure that they did not succeed without hopping away a little.

The representation of complete equilibrium in which one would think, for instance, architecture and other works of the static arts would excel, such as pictures and sculpture, always shows a counter-tendency in certain sweeping, slanting and curving lines. Such tendencies can be enormously exaggerated as was the case, for instance, in the structures and ornaments of the baroque period. All the dignified and concentrated solemnity which characterised the Egyptian temples was entirely lost in the baroque style and gave way to a mighty swinging of curved and curling lines.

All decors and the costumes of dancers, beginning with the fluttering robes with which, as we heard, the dancing apes bedecked their bodies, give the possibility of accentuating or diminishing the impression of slightness or solidity, of restlessness or calm, of veering away, or of poise.

Can you see that in the first-mentioned definition of dance, namely that it is rhythmically ordered movement, the polarity of stillness and stir was already hidden? The ordering factor of rhythm is the momentary interruption of the flow of movement by a short state of stable equilibrium. Movement itself has the tendency to sway and to continue indefinitely.

The reference I made in the beginning to the mystics who interpreted the universe as a dance of the stars around a god, thus takes on a new meaning. So does the statement of the scientist that in all matter is dance, the dance of the electrons around the central core of the atom. The stillness of the seed in the stone of a fruit expands later into the incredible movement of the growing tree which is reflected in the firmness of its trunk and the network of its branches.

Have we now got any nearer the question why man dances and why these birds and apes and insects dance? Someone might say, first of all I wish to know why matter dances. And it is true that this would be the first question which should be answered. But we must frankly admit that we do not know why. Dance, taken in this wide and general sense, is a fundamental activity of life, of existence, and therefore we arrive at the astonishing result that all that exists dances, matter and living beings alike, animals as well as man. There is a fundamental urge in Nature to move and in the case of the human being, to move rhythmically if emotion attains such a degree that the inexplicable desire for a unified experience of time and space becomes irresistible.

Perhaps it is not completely impossible to get nearer the solution of the problems: Why does man dance? Why do animals dance? Why are all these dance-like motions in nature? The solution can only be found by studying the history of dance as a poetic and spiritual emanation of man's body-mind.

Poetic people assert that dance is the expression of a soul. We shall not argue whether the doubts science raises about the existence of a soul are more or less well founded. We are not concerned here with whether the idea of a soul is only an image of something indefinable which animates the living body. Be that as it may, it is a very useful image. Therefore let us speak about soul, or if you prefer it, about mind without any scientific prejudice. We shall also not argue whether animals have a soul or not. I personally, when I look into the eyes of a dog, am convinced at

that moment that he has a soul. He loves me, he hates me, he understands me, he trusts or mistrusts me: all that is sufficient to convince me of his soul. There is soul in action, in motion; perhaps it is an action arising from emotion, perhaps it is a kind of dance.

The dance of animals, however, including the inner impulses which drive them to move in a specific manner, both resembles and differs from the dance of men in more than one respect.

Man has very different aims in his dancing. One person wants to forget himself and his sorrows. He dances because dancing causes him pleasure, gives him gaiety and happiness. Another one perhaps dances because he feels stronger and healthier afterwards. In the olden days, philosophers and priests danced in order to acquire certain knowledge about the deeper sense of life. Professional dancers do not dance only in order to earn their living —that is anyway a very questionable affair—they dance because they have a vocation. They have the urge to speak with their movements, to convey something of their inner visions which they believe will be of interest and value to their fellow beings.

All these motives have no application to animal dancing. The dance of animals resembles much more the dance of matter. In many instances it seems to be an absolutely unconscious activity which the animal is compelled to perform by natural impulse, while man, even if he does not undertake it consciously, almost always has a conscious response to it. All this appears to give a straightforward and rather obvious explanation of dance. But it is not at all as simple as that. When we search more deeply we find hidden in man's dance an ecstatic state of mind.

Dance is often described as born out of a kind of frenzy, that means, that all dancing involves a change of mental state, a change from a comparative inner quietude and stillness to exaltation and excitement. This excitement is connected with or results in that kind of extreme concentration which we call unity of body and mind and in which subconscious awareness of unified space and time is present. In such an ecstatic state the dancing person is nearer to a natural and less conscious life. He is in a state of mind comparable to the one we sometimes experience, for instance, in our sleep, when we seem aware of nothing but a simple feeling of existence. Such is the feeling that accompanies the state of ecstasy.

But man can consciously produce a state of ecstasy, and can work with it to make himself stronger or wiser. By dancing he can express thoughts and feelings and exercise his suggestive power, thus stimulating thought, feeling and action in others. Man uses ecstasy consciously in magic. Then his state of mind is very unlike the one in sleep. It is much more comparable to that of a hypnotist, who consciously enforces in others a sleep-like or ecstatic condition.

When we compare now the poetic language of human dance with the dances of animals, we could simply say: the dance and the ecstasy of man are more active while the dance of animals is more passive. There is no doubt that man's dancing and a great part of all artistic and creative functions are to a large extent based on ecstasy. We must, however, realise the big difference between the involuntary natural ecstasy of the animals and the voluntary or consciously produced ecstasy of men.

The ecstatic power of man can become uncontrolled and perverted. A chief cause of the illnesses of the mind finds its explanation here. Hysteria and madness can be the result of an unnatural and unbalanced use of ecstasy. Ecstasy is a gift of Nature which benefits man and helps to increase his life forces, but he has to know its characteristic qualities and to learn how to harmonise them. Many errors of individual as well as of communal living derive from the contempt and misunderstanding of ecstasy.

When tracing the arts, and above all the fundamental art of dancing through the ages, we can recognise the strong influence which the ecstatic power of man has had on the process of civilisation. The history of dance can give us more than somewhat perfunctory information about dances and dance-steps of the past or about the names and lives of some famous ballerinas. The history of dance is the history of the intuitive life of mankind. It is a deeply touching epic poem on human function which unveils more of the hidden motives of man's aspirations and of his destiny than do many other legends or reports on the facts of the past.

It is true that we can follow only with great difficulty the development of dance throughout the ages. An exact literature of dance history does not exist. All we can learn from books about the dance of the past is a kind of legendary tradition of a few steps vaguely preserved, and there are some descriptions of dances and customs hidden in a corner of a general history of civilisation. It

is the task of modern dance science to discover and collect such dispersed information.

We have spoken about the different ways dance is used to achieve certain purposes, such as entertainment, education, means of expression and so forth. The easiest form of a survey is to divide the matter of dance into three parts. These three parts are: the art of dancing, dance education, and the science of dance.

To-day dance on the stage is performed in very different ways. We distinguish the theatrical dance with its culmination in dance-drama from another form which is often called concert-dance. The latter seldom has a dramatic form; it is more abstract and lyric. The show-dances in variety and cabarets could be mentioned as another form of artistic dance-work. There are a lot of nuances which are sometimes very hard to distinguish. But they all have a common characteristic, namely, to be performed and to be seen.

As a contrast to this are ballroom and country dances, which have more or less the character of festivity dances. They are executed at certain festive and social occasions, and although they serve solely as enjoyment and recreation for the dancers, they should also be included in the art of dancing.

Dance education has two principal forms. One is the dance teaching proper of both amateur and professional stage dancers. The other form of dance teaching has quite a different aim, namely, to assist general education and human development by means of the dance. Each of the two has its own history during the course of which we can observe continually changing and varying forms of training.

In future, the history of dance will be a part of the science of dance, and will incorporate besides data about historic facts an analysis of principles of movement as a human expression, of the laws of harmony as inherent in dance, as well as of the various theories and methods of dance education.

Dance science and also dance education are as old as humanity. The first form of teaching in primitive times was probably dance teaching. At least we know that in the educational system (if one can call it so) of primitive peoples, dancing played a prominent part and the science of dance was the first wisdom of man. This forgotten wisdom, so difficult to recover, may prove to be one of the most interesting aspects of our considerations in the course of

these lectures. Science of to-day tries, as we shall see another time, to replace the old science of dance with the subjects of rhythmology and dynamics.

We shall also hear about certain experiences which to-day are gradually being brought into view again from the long forgotten background of ancient civilisations. Actually, it is contemporary man who, with his new outlook on the art of dancing, conjures up this lost world.

Once again he becomes aware of his dance heritage. It is true that this re-awakening may be partly due to a conscious penetration into his own background. Ethnography and comparative anthropology have found means of reconstructing certain prehistoric facts and have helped to tap a once prodigious source of human experience.

The vast fields of dance festivals, dance mysteries, exorcism, fakirism, dance ethics, education by means of the dance, theatrical performances, and even healing methods by dancing, are, as already mentioned, not yet comprehended in a history in the ordinary sense. The various ups and downs of movement consciousness, the flourishing and dying of many styles of dance, and the many changes of educational methods seem to us to be almost inextricable. It is a jungle of sudden appearances and disappearances, a glistening and colourful wonder-world which awaits exploration.

We must not allow ourselves to be led to the hasty conclusion that our dancing is a simple inheritance from brutish ancestors. Dance is never the end of a development, it much rather seems to indicate the beginning of an unfolding. Historically seen, it is the springtime of a new period when dancing flourishes. For instance, that was the case in the prehistoric period, a time of awakening and first development of man, who began very soon to understand that dancing is not only a pleasure and an outlet, but that it contains possibilities for self-education.

When we look at the historical development, we see that a period of natural dancing—as I called it—was followed by a period of discovery of the educational possibilities hidden in dancing. The next period tried to explain the deeper sense of motions and emotions. This stretch of time was characterized by a kind of philosophic and scientific interest in motion and dance. The religions of that time used the dance as the chief channel for

mythological representations. The greatest parts of rites and ceremonies were based on dance movements. In short, I should like to call this period the dawn of the science of dance. The last step in the development is the artistic and the theatrical dance.

In each period man seems to be enthusiastically interested in the latest stage. He sometimes forgets the existence and the advantages of former achievements. This is a general historic truth, a peculiarity of man's mentality: curiosity for new things, contempt for the old ways.

However, the entire heritage of all that is best in the four stages is still at hand to-day. Natural dancing, dance education, science of dance and art of dance, are, and will remain, four very valuable achievements of man.

RUDOLF LABAN.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RUDOLF LABAN'S STUDIES IN HUMAN MOVEMENT

(A lecture given at the Art of Movement Studio in February, 1960)

Rudolf Laban, in a life-long study of human movement, made a number of observations which are of vital significance in human action and human relationships.

Creative Dance

His most outstanding contribution, to which all his other discoveries are subservient, is creative dance.

He felt the movement of the universe as a dance: the life of nature and organic growth, the forces of the earth, the sea and the heavens in their spaceways and seasonal recurrence, for him all was a dance of mighty rhythms and forms.

In extensive travels over the continents, he found that man in his dances mirrored the same universal rhythms and thereby established for himself his relationship with nature and his place in the world. In the natural spontaneity of his dance, for example, in rising and sinking, opening out to right or left and closing in, in quick, lively or calm rhythms, man became intuitively aware of the rhythms and forms which existed in the world around him, and on which he depended. He re-affirmed them in the sensations of his own movement and in the feeling of contact with his fellows.

In an industrial and materialistic age, Laban realised the need to preserve spontaneity in both children and adults; he wanted to awaken and to stimulate the creative ability with which, he believed, all human beings were to some degree endowed, and to see man's intuitive faculty function and flower.

Creative dance based on efforts, shapes and group relationships as he observed and clarified them is a valuable means of attaining these ends.

Functional and Expressive Movement

Through watching numbers of people in many varied situations Laban saw that they moved, not only to perform actions in relation to external objects, with a clear aim in view, but that they also moved and made gestures, perhaps with head, hand or shoulder, which had no objective aim, were non-utilitarian, but which were expressive and gave some indication of individual personality.

His observations led him to distinguish between two aspects of human movement: functional, concerned with objective action, and expressive, indicating an inherent mood.

Uniqueness of Personal Movement

He was able also, by observing the marked differences in the movements of different people, to see the uniqueness of every individual's personal movement, and that every human being has unique ways of moving in his or her natural actions and responses.

Each has, as it were, an innate movement endowment which is characteristically his and which provides him with his best and most fruitful ways of work, and which, as preferred ways of moving, is unlikely ever to be wholly changed. For example, the preference for deliberateness or for sudden reactions, for a direct or indirect response, for tension or relaxation, these are characteristics frequently visible in the movement habits of different people, and they are recognised to be indicative to some extent of their personality and ways of work.

Effort Study

Detailed study of such characteristic movements as shown by different individuals in varied circumstances enabled Laban to evolve principles of effort which underlie all human movement.

His analysis of movement in terms of the four motion factors of weight, space, time and flow enabled him to see not only what kind of movements an individual made, but also how they were made: differences in timing, where the stresses or accents came, what the shapes were and how they were linked together in patterns or phrases.

Notation

He also devised a form of notation through which all movement can be written down and so recorded accurately and in detail. A graph can be made to show the series of changes in any movement phrase. Both the exact movements required by a given task and those preferred by a particular pupil can be separately written down and, away from both pupil and task, the similarities and differences can be examined.

Space Harmony

Perhaps some of Laban's richest and most profound discoveries are to be found in the principles of space harmony, which are based upon the stability and mobility—stable equilibrium and mobile equilibrium—of the human body as it moves in space. Here he has not only clarified, for the dance, forms which give it the necessary disciplines, but he has shown the meaning inherent in both form and shape and its significance in human experience; for example, man's upright carriage, and the change of attitude when he bends forward or bows; his right and left symmetry and his ability to move forward or backward, all of which affect his orientation in his work and relationships.

Laban's ideas are widely known and have made valuable contributions in the fields of art, education, industry and therapy. His work has strongly influenced physical education, especially that for girls and women. But while much of the work that is done is based on the principles of movement he discovered, the full impact of his ideas on educational thought is less well understood.

Objective Movement

Children have a fundamental desire, not only to use their movement capacities to the full, but also to enrich and develop them. In education, the use of tools, toys and all kinds of material objects as a stimulus to movement and to give opportunity for the acquisition of skills, each with its inherent rhythm, has always been recognised. Possibly the satisfaction obtained through the rhythms of effort in themselves has been less appreciated.

The gymnasium offers possibilities not only for learning and practising many objective actions valuable in themselves, and

appropriate to pupils of all ages, but also for giving a rich experience in the effort qualities inherent in actions dealing with objects. Through the wide variety of activities offered, girls can gain confidence in their natural movement rhythms and soon find those tasks in which they can achieve success. But acute observation on the part of the teacher is needed to see why, apart from physique, one girl will tackle and succeed in some tasks more readily than others, what the causes of success and failure are, and what tasks to set to ensure that obvious ability is fully developed, and qualities of effort that appear to be lacking are awakened and brought into action.

To set appropriate disciplines is often difficult when classes are large and many activities are in progress, but experience in and knowledge of effort principles and their application to specific tasks could hardly fail to be helpful.

Indeed, in the attainment of good standards and style in performance and in the maintenance of interest, real understanding of effort qualities would seem essential.

Some girls readily attempt a task, but they will be less willing to "stick at it" and perfect it, and so lose the enjoyment of an achievement in which, for example, the sensation of flight, or the full extension of the body when swinging from the arms or in leaping becomes really satisfying.

To work objectively and, therefore, to know "what" you have to do is not enough; the understanding of "how" to work offers an added stimulus. All objective action is concerned with the degree of resistance or strength in certain parts of the body together with changes in timing and continuity and the directional pathways appropriate to the task. For example: to understand acceleration, and when it is essential in the preparation for a jump; to know the moment of climax in a vault which demands perhaps the greatest degree of effort; and to be able to check the natural inclination to let the movement "flop to a finish", but to hold the point of climax and its necessary tension just long enough before yielding the body weight to make an appropriate recovery; these are disciplines in movement which are both helpful to successful achievement and also give an inner satisfaction in body management and control.

Group tasks also have their place and provide opportunity for working together and for developing an appropriate common

rhythm. Observations of individuals and groups by each other can help in the understanding of effort, and in cultivating sympathetic recognition and tolerance of individual differences and difficulties.

The aim to preserve, encourage and develop versatility, fluency and control in objective movement is well worth while.

In addition, the maturing adolescent girl might well be helped through her experience, both to know what her best and, therefore, happiest ways of work are, and to assess in terms of movement the opportunities in any given task in relation to her own gifts and limitations.

The gymnasium is, in the main, a laboratory for the first stages of learning bodily skill and discipline. From these, the more specific skills, games and sports develop, and they in turn lead on to wider fields of human endeavour in the mastery of the material world—the world of mountains, the world under the sea, and the world of the heavens.

The desire for efficiency in the mastery of material objects and tools is universal; no one likes to be wholly incompetent. But such efficiency represents only one aspect of living and there is always, throughout life, the need for contact with others, for the harmonious relationships that give security. Adolescents are especially anxious to fit in with and be accepted by their own groups and not to feel left out. They are aware, to some degree, that it is their attitude, mood and behaviour which will make them acceptable or unacceptable, but they have little or no knowledge of what their moods are or how to change them.

Expressive Movement

Most people are aware of muscular tautness in the body when in a temper and, perhaps also, the pleasant feeling of relaxation that goes with laughter. The "hollow laugh" is an apt phrase to describe someone who is unable to enjoy the real relaxation of laughter.

The tense, awkward movements of someone who is beset by anxiety and fear, and the ease and poise of one who is unafraid and "comfortable with himself" are well known. Phrases such as "throwing one's weight about", "for ever in a hurry", "pulling a wry face" indicate the association of body attitudes and gestures with inner feelings.

Expressive movement, with its inherent feeling and mood, by means of body carriage, gestures and steps, communicates inner attitudes which can either establish or prevent harmonious or conflicting relationships between one person and another. Unlike objective movement, which, wide as it is in scope, tends, nevertheless, to be limited by the demands of the material object, expressive movement has no such limitations and all the possibilities in movement for a human being are considered.

The field of effort, shape, and form is immensely rich, and the expression of every variety and shade of mood in a clear form becomes possible.

In the art of movement and dance, based upon individual and group relationships, with their underlying efforts and forms, the significance of Laban's studies can well be observed. As in all art, movement to be realised must be experienced and felt. An intellectual approach without inner understanding on the part of the teacher or pupil is unlikely to evoke a full response. An over-emotional approach is equally unsatisfactory because it can result in exaggerated effort qualities and loss of form, which may disturb the unity of a composition and the enjoyment derived from it.

Modern Educational Dance

Some types of dance can be enjoyed as physical exercise and recreation without further aim. Modern educational dance has as its aim not only enjoyable participation in an art form, but also the unity of experience possible through a composition in which appropriate effort qualities and forms are created and experienced together in harmonious sequence.

Dance is natural to a young child. At first, he or she will need only a stimulus to enable him to enjoy his spontaneity, to develop his creative ability in movement, and to explore its possibilities. Later, as in any other subject, guidance is needed, both in the clarification of rhythm and form and also to open up new and more adventurous fields of creative movement.

It is perhaps the unity of all aspects of human nature in doing, feeling and thinking together with the intuitive apprehension of the relatedness of each to the other and to the whole, that has given dance its place as a cultural creative activity in human society throughout all stages of man's development. The enjoy-

able experience of complete participation, which is characteristic of dance, enhances inner attitude and feeling and causes a sensation of elation and satisfaction. Through the interplay of harmonious and conflicting or contrasting movement-rhythms and shapes, with their inherent moods, awareness of effort quality and form grows. Differences between one movement mood and another, and transitions from one to another—as they occur so often in creative dance—are felt and gradually recognised. Expressive movement in others is more readily understood, and the intuitive awareness of the feelings and moods of others that accompanies such understanding can help in the development of tolerance and sympathy.

Dance has, perhaps, a further aim towards the integration of all aspects of the personality: the creation in the individual, as it were, of a central focus, a "power house" of feeling and understanding but without losing his own inner balance—a mobile equilibrium, very sensitively balanced.

Of the three fields of movement which serve the needs of education, games perhaps can be said to be governed by a deep sense of fair play and justice; cheating and violence are taboo.

Drama and dance drama deal with conflict: situations involving, for example, joy and sorrow, justice and injustice and their resolution.

Dance is concerned especially with contrasts in harmony and balance, the essence of beauty, and the enhancement of daily life by participation in an activity which, temporarily at any rate, gives a heightened sense of values.

Creation has been described as "the divine summons to the life hidden in non-being". Being and living both mean moving. Movement is of the essence of creation. Knowledge and awareness of its content and significance can bring enrichment to life, can enliven work and play, and can bring understanding to all spheres of human relationship.

R. M. Dewey.

MOVEMENT AND SPEECH (PART I)

"For what are breath, speech, echoes, winds,
But dancing of the ayre in sundry kinds?"

These lines of Sir John Davies, written in 1596, illustrate a conception of sound as an aspect of motion which does not appear to have been shared, nor its implications fully realised for over three hundred years when Laban expressed the same idea in the phrase "audible movement."

While there are obvious connections between speech, poetry, music, song and dance, and attempts are sometimes made to link these together in artistic creations, these various human achievements are usually considered separately for purposes of study, and of all of them, probably, spoken language seems the most divorced from the realm of action. Indeed, since by definition speech is the communication of thoughts through articulate sounds or words—the chief tools of the thinking and reasoning processes —verbal expression is often regarded as the complete antithesis of movement expression.

It is, of course, true that the capacity for speech is bound up with the capacity for thought, and nowadays it is accepted that the differences between human speech and the natural sounds of animals are not merely, as Darwin postulated, differences of degree—the greater number of sounds possible and their distinctness of articulation—but of kind: that is, they signify fundamental differences in mental powers. What distinguishes man's means of communication from that of animals is his ability to differentiate sounds accurately and consistently, and to attach to them a conventional and limited meaning.

As R. A. Wilson* has pointed out, this power of differentiation

* "The Birth of Language."

seems to be directly associated with the capacity for discriminating between objects in space and events in time with a measure of exactness. An animal's mind, though radiating to a certain circumference beyond its body is, like its body, enclosed within a local space-time continuum, unable to be awakened to any consciousness of things or occurrences outside the range of the senses. Man's mind, on the other hand, while also centred in a material body has, as it were, broken through the local space-time barrier so that for him, with the birth of conscious reason, a second world has come into existence: a counterpart of the external space-time world in which objects and events exist independently of the senses, and for which some system of mental symbols is required.

It is, however, a dangerously simple step to go on to assume that language is exclusively concerned with the cognitive and reflective processes of man and somewhat disassociated from his action-life. This is far from being the case, particularly among children and non-civilised peoples, whose capacities to think-and-feel-and-do-together are much more integrated than in sophisticated persons.

Studies of the speech of natives in New Guinea led Malinowski* to the conclusion that speech in its primitive forms should always be considered against the background of human activities and regarded as a mode of behaviour in practical matters, rather than as a vehicle of thought. This was particularly evident in circumstances where more than one person was engaged in the same pursuit, hunting, fishing, ceremonial occasions and so on, when all the conversation was essentially embedded in action, springing from the context of the situation and binding together all who took part.

The same remains true, even in modern society, of groups of people forming a team for work or play and united in action by words running parallel to the events taking place. It is not so much that ideas are exchanged or information passed on, but that what is felt and thought in the individual mind about the progress of events finds outlet in audible action: speech is a discharge of emotional and intellectual activity.

Narrative speech in primitive communities also serves largely as a mode of social action, rather than as a means of transmission of

* "The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages."

thought, the speaker relating his experiences (in the way of many ardent conversationalists!) more for his own satisfaction than for the enlightenment of his audience. It springs from the same source, the desire to relive certain events intensely in order to savour them to the full, together sometimes with the need to accept them as part of reality, as that which inspires mimetic dance or pantomime, which in many societies is closely associated with the art of story-telling and narrative poetry and song.

Another aspect of speech as an instrument of action, and one dependent again on man's gregarious nature, is what has been called "phatic communion"—that is, speech which establishes bonds of personal union between people brought together by the mere need for companionship, but which does not serve any purposes of communicating ideas. As the authors of "The Meaning of Meaning" remark, "Throughout the Western world it is agreed that people must meet frequently, and that it is not only agreeable to talk, but that it is a matter of common courtesy to say something even when there is hardly anything to say."*

Thus, a typically English expression such as "Nice day today," or the many formal greetings of semi-primitive tribes such as "Whence comest thou?" are neither the result of intellectual contemplation nor designed to arouse reflection in the person addressed. They are not really concerned with ideas about the weather or the place that has just been left, but are more in the nature of "feelers" put out to establish contact; literally "moves" to overcome barriers of strangeness and tension: they fulfil a need which seems inherent in man to break silence when confronted with others, especially strangers.

There can be little doubt that man's strong social instincts played a considerable part in the development of spoken language, but the "contact" theory, which is based on the assumption that communication of information to others is the prime objective of language, overlooks both the phenomenon of speech as action in itself, and the pleasure derived from sound-making of all kinds. This is as true for the individual when alone as when he is with others.

Plato referred to thinking as "the soul talking to itself", and as we can all testify, a good deal of silent inner speech is going on in our minds during much of our waking hours—a kind of

* C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards: "The Meaning of Meaning."

running commentary on events that occur not only in the world of external reality but in our own private world. This, while sometimes a kind of rehearsal for some occasion of which there may be an actual performance, is frequently not addressed to anyone other than the individual himself, so that while speaking aloud to one's self is generally regarded as eccentric in the mature adult, this silent speech is an important means of carrying out our various activities.

With young children, of course, these commentaries are often voiced and are an essential part of their development, an active response to their surroundings. They chatter on to themselves almost interminably, irrespective of whether anyone is listening or not, and moreover derive enjoyment from the sheer activity of their vocal organs, which is often as seemingly purposeless as those larger bodily manifestations of delight in movement for its own sake, such as twirling round and round or jumping up and down incessantly.

This aspect of speech as a source of pleasure in itself will be dealt with more fully in a later article, but meanwhile it is interesting to note the significance of the fact that while in children between the ages of one and two, nouns are more numerous in the vocabulary than all other parts of speech put together (with verbs next), in frequency of usage verbs come easily first. This confirms the well-known fact that a young child is both active and ego-centric and sheds yet further light on the relationship between speech and action.

Words not only *are* action in themselves, or an accompaniment of action; they may also be the most efficient means of achieving results for a young child, active forces helping him to obtain what he wants. Before he can articulate clearly, the very act of making a noise usually succeeds in his attracting attention, but once words come into his possession they are powerful weapons indeed, and it is little wonder that the act of utterance becomes associated with a sense of control. The name of a person possesses the power of causing that person to come, a toy or food called for probably appears: in all the young child's experience words have meaning in so far as they act and not as entities in themselves which enable him to understand and perceive.

In this connection we might remind ourselves of the correspondence between the earliest natural sounds of a baby, "ma"

and "da," and the accepted names for mother and father. It has been suggested that the repeated sound "ma," so often producing the appearance of the mother, has been responsible for this becoming the root form for words signifying "mother" in many languages.

Such a close identification of symbol with object leads directly in unsophisticated minds to a belief in sympathetic magic: the attempt to control natural events through deed and/or word, the pronouncing of a name affecting the thing or person owning that name, and the avoidance of it or indirect reference to the thing itself curbing its potency. This persists to-day even in the most civilised societies, a superstitious fear of something happening, or not happening, if it is mentioned, being as widespread as the act of touching wood or keeping the fingers crossed. All kinds of euphemisms exist for dying or death, while in England particularly, it seems almost forbidden to comment on a nice day in case it should rain!

Thus a word comes to have magic power: it is a means of bringing things about, a handle to acts and objects, not merely a definition of them. It arises from mental differentiation, yes, but its early use is allied with action and not with contemplation. This is illustrated in countless myths and legends in which the fate of the hero or heroine depends on some name or special word, the answering of a question or the solving of a riddle, while the formula of many spells and charms consists essentially of words, or at least a special mixture of sounds, probably accompanied by action. The door in the Arabian tale obeyed no command but "Open Sesame!" and to-day those who seek to sway the wills of others still search, like Kipling's Hindoos, for the 'master word' or slogan which may be the key to this power.

This element of magic in the use of words has long been recognised, but what seems so often to escape attention is that the act of utterance itself is an aspect of that vital force in man—a movement force—which causes intense desire to find outlet in action. The desire to name things, to speak their names, perhaps to chant them, may be regarded as part of the same compelling urge which drives primitive man to perform his imitative dances. In order to become familiar with the nature of things, to understand them (in the sense of entering into the essence of their being), to incorporate them into the pattern of his own existence

and ultimately to gain mastery over them, he seeks to identify himself with them, with their audible properties as well as with their visible characteristics, as much through his voice as with the rest of his body.

The primitive is a man of action and as Jane Harrison* has said, he does not appeal to gods for what he wants, he performs it: "If he wants rain or wind or sun, he does not go to church and prostrate himself before a false god in supplication, he summons his tribe and they dance a rain or a wind or a sun dance. . . . Instead of prayers he utters spells—or as we should say, he practises magic."

Finally, a consideration of spoken language from a grammatical view-point provides evidence that speech is initially rooted in action, and here it is of interest to examine Malinowski's experiences with primitive tribes in the light of Wilson's space-time exposition of the birth of language. This accounts for the preponderance, in any tongue, of speech symbols expressing form and action, i.e., nouns and verbs, other parts of speech existing to clarify and enlarge further space-time conceptions: pronouns and adjectives being concerned with objects in space, adverbs with the manner or sequence of time changes, prepositions with the relations between the two, and so on.

Malinowski points out, however, that while nouns and verbs undoubtedly predominate in primitive vocabularies, only those things and events are specifically named which have immediate significance for the individual or the tribe, everything else being labelled somewhat indiscriminately. For instance, an inquiry about a particular tree or insect or bird which was of no importance in the daily, active life of the tribe would be dismissed as, "Oh that is just bush", or merely "a flying animal". On the other hand, a useful object would certainly have a name, detailed reference to its properties would be given and the thing would thus be distinctly individualised.

Thus the singling-out process which ultimately leads to the classification of objects for the purposes of knowledge springs essentially from man's dealings with his conditions of existence. Nor is it restricted to utilitarian objects and activities only, such as those involved in the provision of food, clothing, protection against danger and so on, for whatever stimulates action is what

* "Ancient Art and Ritual."

"matters" to such peoples, and therefore their vocabularies include reference to all those aspects of their emotional and spiritual life which find expression in war and play, dance and ritual.

Verbs are obviously related to action, although it appears that they evolve, as in the case of a child, later than nouns, and in primitive tongues are always of much simpler structure than in well-developed languages, in which they may define not only the nature of the action itself, but the person performing it and even his attitude towards it. They are essentially expressions of change; changes of types of action such as eating, drinking, resting, walking; states of the body such as hunger, thirst, fatigue; and later, mental changes, variations of mood and will, embodying attitudes and sentiments.

If then we recognise that speech and action are not poles apart as we might at first imagine, we might be led to inquire into the connection between a word and its meaning, to see whether any "movement-logic" operates here or whether any apparent association of sound and sense is purely accidental. This question will be pursued in a later article.

H. Betty Redfern.

"SHALL WE DANCE?"

A year in England! A whole year of teaching on foreign soil! An impending ocean voyage on the S.S. *United States!* All these things registered on my mind in a series of rapid, telegraphic impulses. The letter from the State Department confirmed my appointment as exchange teacher in the United Kingdom. The careful announcement from Washington several months before notifying us that the exchange might be a possibility had excited us beyond measure. In the glow of eager anticipation I was perfectly willing to go into a College of Physical Education as a music specialist, had enthusiastically accepted the fact of an all-girl student body, was intrigued by the idea of being the only male on an otherwise feminine faculty and was wrestling with the problem of seeming to appear as a conductor of experience when in point of fact I would be making my debut with a choir and an orchestra. The one part of the work in England that I had shoved to the back of my mind returned to haunt me now that the exchange was a reality. This was improvised accompaniment for the dance programme.

Five years as Professor of Piano and Theory at Eastern Washington College of Education had not prepared me although it had given me confidence in my teaching abilities. Frequent appearances as accompanist for concert artists and the satisfying collaboration with my wife as a two-piano team had been richly rewarding. However, none of these endeavours had the slightest thing to do with dance, and willing as I was to try the near impossible, I couldn't picture myself as a dance accompanist.

Images of a piano transposition and improvisation course taken at college rose up like a spectre to plague me. By endless repetition I had transposed an entire Beethoven Sonata up a fifth and my "extemporized" rhapsody had been a feat of memory. Unhappily, my improvised "developments" were always too scant,

in the wrong place, or the "B" section was where the "A" section should have been. I appeared to be a dismal failure and after the course was over I quietly moved Beethoven back down a fifth and resumed my enjoyment of the piano. Black memories also returned of a job as accompanist for a ballet teacher to help with college expenses. This was a traumatic experience that just about ruined me forever on the dance. Improvising resulted in symptomatic arm pains and headaches which brought my dance career to an abrupt, and I hoped, final close.

As soon as I arrived at my headquarters of Bedford College of Physical Education I nervously scanned my timetable. My heart palpitated when I saw that it included eight hours a week of dance accompaniment, evenly divided between modern and traditional dance classes. Eight hours a week! Although the nature of folk dance was predictable, I hadn't a clue as to what would be required in the modern sessions.

My introduction to dance was through auditions held for potential freshman girls who, if accepted, would be entering a year hence. These girls had been put through the ropes in every conceivable aspect of physical education and were now to demonstrate their dancing ability to my music. This was a comparatively easy assignment for me because I was not required to improvise, although the dancers were. I selected music full of contrast in mood and tempo to test their interpretative ability. In this instance "set" music could be used and that fact sustained me. The small percentage of heavy-legged girls disturbed my stereotype of the P.E. major—the majority were trim, graceful, attractive young English women. Out of the corner of my eye it was possible to watch the serious young dancers all of whom were terrified and struggling desperately with their assigned task. The college was the best of its kind in England and their efforts were being shrewdly watched by the faculty. Several of the young dancers, who had obviously had some prior training, had perfected a type of tormented writhing which they did through everything. I could scarcely keep my little minuet section buoyant during such anguished contortions! Others, whose real speciality turned out to be games, simply turned cartwheels and leaped high in the air with a singularly athletic approach. One or two caught the suggestion of the music as it evolved and had the earmarks of good raw material.

Shortly thereafter classes started in earnest and "facing-up" to my eight hours a week could no longer be avoided. One of the modern dance teachers, Diana Gamble, was only too happy to "talk things out" and we found almost immediately that our work together was going to be one of the highpoints of the year. Diana in her "working costume", a skin-tight leotard over a long and willowy figure, made a sharp contrast to the students in their demure gym suits. Her incredible feline grace challenged their emulation and fascinated her accompanist.

She initiated me into dance improvisation gradually, allowing me at first to bring in prepared material which we selected together. Her scrupulously detailed lesson plans illuminated every inch of the way. By this means we circumvented the possibility of letting the students guess the inexperience of their exchange teacher. Little by little, as the practical necessity of improvisation approached, the small bits and pieces of music that had served as crutches no longer seemed to fit the need. And then came the day when I walked in on my own two feet, put the music rack *down* and became, for better or for worse, a dance accompanist.

Of course it wasn't quite that simple. There were hours of experimentation to find a style which would be successful; there were many sincere, but misguided piano sounds which only bewildered and benumbed the dancers. But since it was impossible to remember what I had just done, the same mistake was never repeated, at least not in the same key or in the same register.

Out of my thinking and experimenting I found it was possible to characterize the various dance actions in pure "sound". I constantly searched for the right sound to evoke the movements the teacher desired. The pace of the lesson was swift and the movement ideas were fragmentary, making it difficult to plan an attack through conventional means involving key centres and modulations. It seemed simpler to watch the movement carefully and then try to capture its essential quality in sound without putting into gear the intellectual machinery of music theory to which I had been tied for so long. This solution freed me from the tyranny of fixed progressions and cadences. Dabbling in pure "sound effect" was a type of musical licence I had never allowed myself. In fact, I had rather deplored the tendency as undisciplined in composers. But here I was loving it.

My dance mentor was wonderful; many times I destroyed that fragile thread that keeps a good lesson plan functioning but fortunately she was experienced enough to repair the damage in a flash. My only consolation was the knowledge that the students were also finding their way and were too busy and out of breath to notice my frequent little Waterloos. It wasn't long before Diana and I were a team. Then she was able to stop making lesson plans for me, and I started to anticipate—actually anticipate —her next request.

Each dance session was a challenge and, every once-in-a-while when a "story idea" was planned in dance I literally smacked my lips at the prospect of finding a way to express it in music. Some of these assignments were difficult and exacting. For example, in one dance class we made use of a primitive theme which was developed by episodes. Some of the students were wearing straw skirts that day, a few had on witch-doctor masks, many were holding shaking instruments or had drums, and all were in a frenzy of anticipation. The first episode pictured members of the tribe sneaking furtively through a dense jungle, individually and in groups. In the music I had to suggest the steaming lushness of the surroundings, the stealth of the tribesmen, the occasional surprises of bird sounds, the possibility of snake and crocodile attacks. The second episode was a "back-at-the-camp young maiden's sun dance." It was to have a certain mesmeric quality, the music had to inspire movements of people bewitched. The last episode was a savage dance of wild abandon, strongly rhythmic but barbaric and brutal in its offbeat accentuation. The responsibility of creating all of this for the dancers weighed heavily on me. However, as the music developed under my hands I grew as excited as the dancers. At the close I found myself, not only limp from the exertion, but with a wretchedly sore foot acquired through reinforcing the offbeat. I was also slightly hoarse from the native helps that I had spontaneously emitted. Possibly this is carrying identification with one's job too far!

Of special enjoyment also were the observation classes in which I was playing for young children. These were taught by our dance teachers and observed by our students. The amazing receptiveness of the children to any musical stimulation inspired me to revel in unrestrained creativity. One day, after several months of playing had made me fairly blasé about it all, Diana asked

the children to move like seaweed in the water. She turned to me and said,

"Some seaweed music, Mr. Smith".

Without batting an eye I responded,

"Do you want the soggy, the stringy, or the type that has the little bulbs on it?"

I had finally come of age!

DONALD KING SMITH,
(Assistant Professor of Music
Eastern Washington College of Education.)

BOOK REVIEW

HANDBOOK OF KINETOGRAPHY LABAN

by Albrecht Knust.

This book, which consists in fact of two volumes, a text book and a volume of examples, is the English translation of the Handbook originally printed in German in 1955 which, in its turn, was a revised and enlarged version of an earlier book written in 1942.

Between these years, Albrecht Knust, the acknowledged authority in this field, compiled his Encyclopaedia of Kinetography Laban, a tremendous work of eight volumes, dealing exhaustively with all aspects of Movement Notation, but so detailed that, as he points out in his Introduction to the present Handbook, it is unlikely that it will ever be printed. Only five copies exist and the new Handbook therefore represents the most comprehensive survey generally available.

As in the Encyclopaedia, the material is arranged in a particular order, that is, according to the various groups of symbols and rules of writing arising from their use—what has been called the alphabet of Kinetography, comparable to that required for the lay-out of a dictionary. It is, however, much more than a dictionary or reference book. It is an extremely lucid exposition of what Laban referred to as "the logic inherent in any movement happening," and provides convincing proof that Laban's system of notation has never been merely a convenient form of shorthand, but has been based from the first on fundamental principles governing human movement.

It, therefore, affords a means of learning the rudiments of movement to anyone who cares to master the alphabet and work

through a selection of the examples (though from a purely practical point of view it is not at all easy to keep open the corresponding pages in each volume at the same time!).

As indicated in the Introduction, it is not necessary to tackle every example before proceeding to the next, since within each section there are numerous references to finer points and more exceptional problems of writing which may be omitted in a preliminary study. In addition, a most useful service has been rendered in providing detailed explanations of the differences which exist between Kinetography Laban and the methods of writing practised by the New York Dance Notation Bureau, particularly as several examples from Ann Hutchinson's book *Labanotation* (published in 1954) have been included for direct comparison.

Ideally what is needed is a single Handbook with the examples interspersed with the text, (preferably in print larger than that of the present edition), and it is a matter for regret that as yet the Kinetography-studying public is too small to make this a feasible proposition. Meanwhile, with the aid of this book as it is, much may be done to "Teach Yourself Kinetography" and perhaps to extend its wider appeal.

H. Betty Redfern.

NOTICES

Filming Dance

Would Guild Members working in university, training college or school, who have any films, film-loops, or photographs of dance, please write to Miss Joan Leedham-Green, Guy's Cottage, Birdham, near Chichester, Sussex.

Days of Dance

Any Members who are planning a day or days of dance for school children, please write to Miss Joy Howard, 21, Empress Avenue, Manor Park, London, E.12.

Modern Dance Holiday Course

The 1961 Summer Course will be held from 24th July to 4th August at Chelsea College of Physical Education, Eastbourne, Sussex.

Further information and application forms may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Mrs. E. Logan, 12, Rupert Street, Glasgow, C.4.

Affiliated Groups

A steady flow of requests reaches the Honorary Secretaries from people moving into new districts, and in particular from students taking up their first teaching post, wishing to know whether there is a group which they can join.

It is essential that the relevant information should reach them by the beginning of the Autumn Term. Secretaries of Affiliated Groups are, therefore, asked to send by June or July details such as when and where meetings are expected to take place the following Autumn. Please write to Miss G. E. M. Stevens, 64, Moor Lane, Wilmslow, Manchester.

A New Career in the Art of Movement for Intending Teachers.

The Art of Movement Studio has pleasure in announcing a new course of training for young men and women leading to the status of qualified teacher. The Ministry of Education has agreed that approved candidates who satisfactorily complete a two-year specialised course in the Art of Movement at the Studio may now become qualified teachers suitable for employment as specialists in Secondary Schools by taking, at Trent Park College, a one-year shortened teachers' course which leads to the Teacher Certificate of the London University Institute of Education.

Applications for this course, which begins in September, 1961, at the Art of Movement Studio, are invited from pupils in Secondary Schools who have a special interest and ability in expressive movement, dance and dance-drama, and who are capable of reaching the standards required of a qualified teacher. Candidates must have the normal qualifications for admittance to Training Colleges.

Applicants will be eligible for consideration for the award of grants to cover fees and expenses; in the first place of the two years of training at the Studio, and afterwards of the one year of training at Trent Park.

Full details and application forms are available from the Secretary, Art of Movement Studio, Woburn Hill, Addlestone, Surrey.

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